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ABSTRACT

The goal of England's Peers Early Education Partnership (PEEP) is to support early communication and literacy skills and to support parents as their children's first educators through both home- and group-based programs. The program is currently offered to all children under 5 years of age and their families in a disadvantaged area of Oxford. This annual report details the partnership's major accomplishments for April 1999 through March 2000, a period spanning PEEP's fourth and fifth years. The major accomplishments of PEEP are described as: (1) the day-to-day development and running of the project; (2) PEEP's contribution to the formation of Rose Hill-Littlemore Sure Start; (3) an agreement to fund the PEEP research studies; (4) securing a 2-year grant to fund a National Development Officer for PEEP; and (5) planning for Phase 2 of the project. Also presented in the report are difficulties encountered, adjustments made to the project, and policy issues involved. The impact of the program made by its contributions to national and government conferences and through various visitors to the program is presented. The report also contains the partnership's financial statement, and outlines plans for Phase 2 of the project (2000-2005). The report concludes that the vision for PEEP as a "generation" project to continue over a further 25 years may be an important objective to pursue. Three appendices include information on the program's trustees and management team, provide additional information about PEEP, and list PEEP's publications and contacts. (KB)

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PEEP ANNUAL REPORT

April 1999 – March 2000

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1. Introduction

The main ongoing achievement of this year has been the crucial day-to-day development and running of the project. There have also been three other major achievements during this period. The first was PEEP's contribution to the formation of Rose Hill-Littlemore Sure Start. Second was the DfEE's agreement - confirmed by Ministers - to fund both the PEEP research studies. Third, the Home Office has made a 2-year grant to fund a National Development Officer for PEEP.

Three recurring themes have dominated the development work of the Management Team this year. The work relating to Sure Start has been a significant factor, and the other two recurring themes are related, being the Publications project and the development of PEEP LINK. All three themes feature in various places in this report, having been major areas of work and progress during the year.

In addition to the implementation of the daily programme and the development work mentioned above, another important factor has been the thinking and planning for PEEP Phase 2, together with the fundraising work that has gone alongside that thinking and planning.

2. Progress

This report of progress during the year has been structured under the following headings:

(i) AREAS OF WORK
(ii) CURRICULUM
(iii) TRAINING
(iv) GROUP RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION
(v) GROUP DELIVERY AND 'LINK' DEVELOPMENT
(vi) RESOURCES
(vii) DISSEMINATION
(viii) SYSTEMS
(ix) PERSONNEL, CENTRE MANAGEMENT AND PREMISES
(x) COMMUNITY AND SURE START
(xi) EVALUATION AND RESEARCH
(xii) INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

(i) AREAS OF WORK

This period spanned the fourth and fifth years of PEEP's first five years, referred to in planning documents as Phase One. The aim for Phase One has been to bring about a significant improvement in educational attainment by developing

and piloting a successful, sustainable and transferable model. In very general terms the work in this period related to completing the development and piloting of the PEEP programme.

Four tasks were perceived as particularly important in this completion period for Phase One:

1. Finalising the PEEP Handbook which documents policies, curriculum, pedagogy and processes.
2. The publication of PEEP curriculum materials (Guidelines, PEEP at Home, audio tapes and accompanying written material).
3. Setting up the Birth to School Study and securing funding for it.
4. Developing further strategies to reach families who do not attend groups (PEEP LINK)

In addition to the day-to-day implementation of the programme, the Management Team's priorities for development work in the period April 1999 – March 2000 were as follows:

a) WHOLE PROJECT PLANNING AND REVIEW

- Handbook: content, use and review
- Annual Reports – new format
- Phase 2 Development Plan 1999 – 2004
- EAZ and PEEP relationship at Nursery Level (4s).
- SURE START and PEEP relationship for Baby, Small and Big Levels (0s – 3s).
- Job description reviews
- Various new appointments

b) CURRICULUM AND TRAINING

- Publications: total curriculum material complete for all five levels, including audio tapes and accompanying songbooks, and Welcome card and tape.
- PEEP for 3s and 4s: strategies for involving more parents and carers as well as staff in settings
- Developing 'in-service' training for Group Staff
- Extend Resources Library: play packs and books
- Plan introduction of Birthday Books
- Overhaul of PEEP Initial Training
- Planning for PEEP Higher Education Certificate at Westminster Institute at Oxford Brookes University

c) GROUPS RECRUITMENT AND DELIVERY

- LINK delivery issues and planning
- Equal opportunities issues in practice

d) RESOURCES

- Updating and extending the Resources Library
- Nursery PEEP resources in two more First Schools
- Training library additions

e) EVALUATION AND RESEARCH

- Impact of Sure Start on Birth to School Study
- First birthday schedule
- Formative evaluation of PEEP LINK
- Interim outcomes
- Nursery PEEP study
- NFER Birth to School Study 6 year overall plan

f) DISSEMINATION (local, national and international)

- Involvement in Oxfordshire 0-3s Strategy Group
- Liaison with Community Workers
- Developing Visitors' Days
- Conference and seminar presentations
- Reports distribution and follow-up where relevant

g) SYSTEMS

- Data collection for LINK
- Millennium compliance
- Extension of IT equipment to meet needs of staff

h) PERSONNEL AND CENTRE MANAGEMENT

- Interim arrangements pending appointment of Centre Administrator
- Peers PEEP reporting systems
- Health and Safety issues
- Personnel issues
- OCN accreditation administration
- Rovacabins installation and office re-organisation
- Long term Centre premises issues (leases etc)

i) COMMUNITY AND SURE START

- Support to new Sure Start Director
- Lead partner role and responsibilities: policy and strategy
- Sure Start Steering Group, and Working Groups for Management, Building, Health and Home Visiting, Community Initiatives, Equal Opportunities and Children's Learning and Care
- Planning for Sure Start Playroom and Crèche in new Centre
- Ongoing relationship between PEEP and Sure Start: staffs, mutually supporting development, implementation
- Learning Bridge project development and completion

j) INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

- Developing role of Finance Officer and Assistant: new systems for accounting and reporting
- Identifying other funding possibilities
- Managing additional funding issues raised by collaboration with Learning Bridge (NIACE), Sure Start and the Education Action Zone
- Managing additional funding issues raised by the development of the publications, PEEP LINK and the Phase 2 Development Plan
- Negotiations with the Gatsby Foundation re publications + application
- Funding for NFER Birth to School Study (DfEE application)
- Funding for the publications (Lloyds TSB application)
- Funding for dissemination (Home Office application)
- Funding for Phase 2

(ii) CURRICULUM

Curriculum group

The aim of the PEEP curriculum is to support early communication and literacy skills and to support parents as their children's first educators. The Curriculum Group is developing into a very useful forum, to include not only the development of the PEEP curriculum, but planning and reviewing group staff training and programme delivery issues.

This year's achievements include the successful splitting of what had previously been the "Small" level of PEEP into PEEP for Ones and PEEP for Twos, which enables us to address the particular issues for each year better.

Publications

The project's major focus has been the process of preparing the whole curriculum for publication. Having been created, piloted, continually refined by delivery and reflection over a period of four years, it is now ready to be published in a new format. Seen as a whole, it represents a unique achievement in the area of parents working in partnership with and for their children. At present it consists of 45 individual 'guidelines', 12 "PEEP at Homes", five audio tapes and songbooks, and an Alphabet book. In preparing the curriculum for publication, we have taken the opportunity to rationalise and pull together the elements and to maximise their accessibility.

The publications need to be attractive, accessible and useful to Group Leaders, parents in PEEP groups, parents at home and to PEEP staff involved in training and dissemination of the work. They are also at the core of PEEP LINK (enabled - and funded in part - by Sure Start), in which situation the curriculum must "speak" to parents who are not in the supportive environment of a PEEP group. The publications are also central to the future dissemination of our work.

The curriculum is to be published as a series entitled **Learning Together**. It will consist of 5 individual loose-leaf binders called:

Learning Together wit' Babies
Learning Together with Ones
Learning Together with Twos
Learning Together with Threes
Learning Together with Fours

Each binder will contain advice on getting started, and three "seasons" of material. Each season will consist of three sections (previously called a Guideline) such as "Babies and Talking", followed by two suggestions for "Things to Do". Each level will also have an audio tape of songs and rhymes, with an accompanying booklet of words.

Always bearing in mind the need for accessibility and liveliness, the binders will be illustrated throughout, using line drawings and photographs. Each page is being designed to convey a key point using a short text and an illustration, with one sentence pulled out and emphasised. The binder also contains diary pages for recording activities and achievements.

Work is well underway and the first PEEP publications will be ready for use by the project in July 2000; and for wider distribution by the end of the year.

During Spring 2000 the curriculum and training group has been working intensively on the Publications project, mainly on the following:

- Accuracy of content
- Defining style
- Identifying headings and pull quotes
- Illustration details
- Organising photographic sessions with parents for all 5 levels – closely working with photographer and ensuring appropriate props
- Working to deadlines for publication and printing
- Preparing introductions for audio materials and song books
- Consulting with Co-ordinators, Group Leaders and further afield for final content of tapes for Songs and Rhymes for Threes and for Fours, including the PEEP Alphabet Song
- Recording the final versions with other musicians.
- Obtaining copyright permission and tracing origins of rhymes – checking with publishers and liaising with authors

Publications development
For the Autumn Term 1999 the project management of Publications development was given to an external consultant in the absence of the Resources Co-ordinator due to ill health. Unfortunately the appointed designers were not able to

fulfil their brief, which resulted in the project slipping by a term. The situation was however speedily rectified by the appointment of another designer. Work then proceeded quickly and efficiently, with the designer project managing liaison with illustrators and the printer, and the Resources Co-ordinator project managing within PEEP.

(iii) TRAINING

Training for PEEP group staff 1999 – 2000
In the Summer Term 1999, a framework for offering training opportunities to PEEP staff was introduced as part of the review of equal opportunities. The systems for participant evaluation of training were also overhauled.

For some while now it has been apparent that one perception of PEEP could be to see the programme as it is delivered in groups as a training programme for parents and carers. This is not generally how it is perceived, possibly because of the project's clear priority of valuing what parents bring and sharing each other's experience in a very straightforward way. However it must be clear that PEEP is first and foremost an adult education programme – for the sake of the children.

Regular group staff training on four mornings per term has been provided, recorded and evaluated, covering the following:

- Working with families; what we hope parents do at home as a result of PEEP, and how we as PEEP workers react to things which come from home
- Following up attendance; support and information by telephone
- Health and safety: manual handling; the importance of knowing how to carry and load, unload and lift
- Why we use music in PEEP
- Music and ORIM; a child's need to learn in a culture
- For assistants – the importance of making PEEP a positive experience for families
- Coping with siblings and twins
- OCN diary pages
- Training opportunities in PEEP

These areas were decided partly as a result of needs identified by the Management Team, and partly from requests emerging from the level meetings and expressed needs of group staff. They, like parents, have benefited from access to training opportunities provided by Learning Bridge this year.

Training plans for Phase 2
The overall co-ordination of training provided by PEEP in Phase 2 as managed by the Director will involve a range of people taking various responsibilities, for matters including:

- Induction into PEEP
- Accreditation
- Learning Bridge work
- PEEP Initial Training
- Training for particular roles
- Individual staff development
- INSET for group and LINK staff
- PEEP Higher Education Certificate
- Visitors Days
- All-day workshops
- Seminars and conferences: attendance/input
- Telephone support

Clearly much of this training provided by PEEP will be accessed by PEEP parents and staff as well as by others accessing it as dissemination.

(iv) GROUP RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

The recruitment visit
Information about all new births in the PEEP catchment area is obtained by our John Radcliffe hospital visitor. 331 babies were born in the PEEP catchment area between 1.4.99 and 31.3.00. PEEP recruitment visits are offered to all families with a new baby in the PEEP catchment area from four weeks after the birth. Additionally local agencies refer people and families may self refer to PEEP. The home visit is the first and very important step whereby PEEP tries to achieve genuine equality of access for all families.

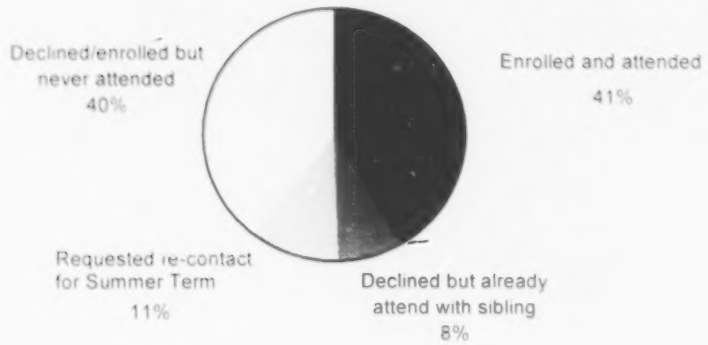
During the home visit the ideas behind PEEP are explained, the rich learning potential of very young babies is discussed together with what is meant by supporting children's learning at such a young age. The idea of sharing books and rhymes with children so young is a new idea for many. We talk through what to expect in the local group and each family is lent a copy of the PEEP video which they can show to other family members. Families within the community are increasingly aware of PEEP and with pleasure the home visitors are aware of the positive reputation which frequently precedes our visit. We record details of enrolling families at this stage to enable monitoring of uptake and to allow us to check that we are reaching the range of families in our catchment area, which is rich in cultural diversity. In PEEP groups this year 20 different languages have been spoken at home by families enrolled in groups. Where needed home visiting takes place with bi-lingual PEEP staff, and bi-lingual support is provided in groups. The home visit is also a time to discuss any special needs the family might have in terms of accessing PEEP, thus enabling group leaders to offer a warm, confident, informed and appropriately resourced welcome to all new families, the firm basis upon which the rich interchange between families and staff within the group depends.

PEEP uptake

Of the 293 families we have made contact with:

- 121 (41%) enrolled and subsequently attended PEEP groups
- 23 (8%) already attend PEEP with sibling and declined additional enrolment at Baby level
- 32 (11%) requested that we re-contact them for the following term
- 115 (40%) declined PEEP, or enrolled and never attended

Fig 1 Pie chart showing recruitment outcome to contacted parents of babies born 1.4.99-31.3.00 n=291


Declined/enrolled but never attended 40%
Enrolled and attended 41%
Requested re-contact for Summer Term 11%
Declined but already attend with sibling 8%

If we include the families of babies who attend PEEP groups with an older sibling, taking the baby with them, we see that so far* 44% of the year's birth cohort families attend PEEP groups with the likelihood of at least a further 10% joining once all families have been contacted. The completed picture of families with babies born in the previous year 1.4.98 to 31.3.99 shows that 57% of families with a new baby attended PEEP (51% through enrolling the baby, 6% with an older sibling.)

**Of the 331 babies born in the last year:*

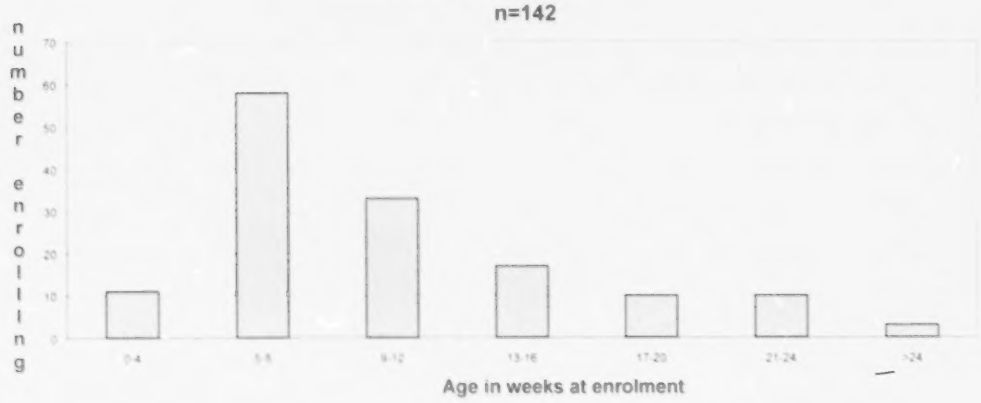
- ***36 are still to be contacted. We do not recruit in the last three weeks of any term***
- ***2 have moved and/or we are unable to contact***

Age of babies at enrolment

142 babies enrolled at baby level. (14% more than actually attended.) The chart below shows the distribution by age at which babies enrolled. 41% of these enrolments take place in the first two months of life.

Fig 2 Age in weeks at enrolment of babies born 1.4.99-31.3.00

n=142



Pathways through PEEP and retention in groups

Management of pathways through PEEP for families Levels 0-3, with enrolment by age in appropriate groups, and the monitoring of the need for new groups are also important aspects of this working area.

The majority of children are recruited at baby level during the post birth home visit. Retention of families in PEEP is robust. As an example, from Autumn 1999 to Spring 2000 the following % carried over into subsequent term.

Fig 3 % Retention at each level Autumn Term 1999→Spring Term 2000

	No. on roll at end of Autumn Term 99	% carried over into Spring Term
Baby	133	82%
Ones	103	83%
Twos	96	75%
Threes	39 (29 eligible to stay)	59%*
Average overall	400 (361 eligible to stay)	78%

* *This figure is proportion of children carrying on in Threes who were not due to enter nursery*

It is clear that for many families PEEP is a long-term pre-school commitment. Families are keen to look ahead and to book their places early as they move through the different levels. The PEEP LINK home visits due to start in July 2000 will ensure provision of materials and or contact with families not able, or unwilling to attend groups.

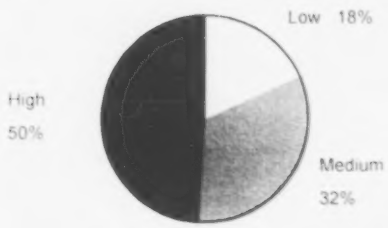
Attendance

- At Levels 0 –3 there was an average of 340 children attending each term over the three terms.
- At Levels 0 –3, 536 children attended PEEP groups; with a further 400 Nursery children involved. This figure does not include 65 further children who attend with a sibling but were not officially on roll.
- 22% of all children attending PEEP during the year were from ethnic minority families.
- Maintaining previous levels of parents' attendance at groups once children reach Big and Nursery PEEP is proving as challenging as expected. However the fact that 60% of 3s are in pre-schools and almost 100% of 4s are in nursery classes offers a range of possible additional strategies to running group sessions, in order to make a positive impact on home learning. For this reason the project has been working closely with the nursery staff teams in all the First schools, and now needs to investigate developing additional strategies at Big PEEP Level with the Pre-school staffs.

Attendance patterns

Once enrolled in PEEP groups patterns of attendance are strong. 50% of PEEP group families attend 2/3 or more of available sessions.

Fig 4 Pie chart showing patterns of attendance of children attending groups over levels Baby, Ones, Twos and Threes averaged over Summer Term 1999, Autumn Term 1999 and Spring Term 2000. Average per term n=340



Attendance Key
Low = 1-33%
Medium = 34-66%
High = 67-100%

Calculated as proportion of weeks it was possible to attend, ie if family joined group halfway through term total possible attendance is 6, not 12

(v) GROUP DELIVERY AND 'LINK' DEVELOPMENT

Equal opportunities
Equal opportunities awareness informs the work of each working area. Specific co-ordination includes:

- Reviewing equal opportunities training needs
- Liaising closely with minority groups and services for special needs
- Delivering training eg use of bi-lingual resources for group leaders, and two sessions on PEEP evening training
- Ensuring response to equal opportunities issues which form part of the standing agenda for level meetings
- Ensuring that group leaders receive the information they need about minority languages of enrolling families and that families with special needs receive appropriately targeted support throughout their PEEP career as they move from level to level
- Writing termly equal opportunities reports for staff
- Monitoring ethnic minority attendance

Programme delivery: Baby, Small and Big PEEP
The main responsibilities in this area over the year have been to continue to develop and run a quality model, while at the same time refining the curriculum content for publication and future dissemination.

Ensuring that PEEP groups run effectively has involved supervision and support for 2 level co-ordinators, 8 group leaders, an assistants' co-ordinator and up to 14 group assistants. Planning and review of delivery, and issues related to group activities, like equal opportunities, resources, special needs, health and safety in premises are discussed at 4 level meetings per term. Friday mornings have been compulsory non contact time throughout the year and have been for training, meetings and administration; following up on Open College Networks (OCN) paperwork and on attendance.

Following restructuring of the personnel structure in Spring 1999, group leaders now work a minimum of 15 hours for PEEP per week. Assistants have continued to be employed on a termly basis. It is gratifying to see a core of 10 who have been in the project from1997, mostly as parents attending a group, who continue to value their work in PEEP and return term after term. Some are indicating that they wish to move on in PEEP to take on more responsibility. In Spring 2000, internal appointments were made in preparation for Phase 2 of PEEP. Every level now has a co-ordinator for support, planning and review of curriculum delivery.

There has been an increase of three groups during the year, one at Baby level, one at Ones level, and one at Threes. At the end of the Spring Term 2000 the distribution was as follows:

10 Baby groups
8 Ones groups
7 Twos groups
4 Free standing Threes groups
5 Circle times with play pack and book borrowing in pre-schools
8 Nursery PEEP settings in First Schools

Babies continue to be recruited into groups throughout the term, up to 18 families per group. In the other levels, this figure is 12 or 15 depending on the restrictions of premises and other factors which need individual consideration, like the number of siblings attending or the need for floor space for one year olds to explore.

Issues arising at Baby PEEP level (for 0 – 12 months)
Families are recruited into the Baby groups throughout the term up to the last two weeks. This has implications for how group leaders run the groups and for the resources they plan. It also means that they have to be prepared for a group which is constantly changing as people join, with or without older siblings. This means that at this level we require leaders who can be flexible and, above all, welcoming and non judgemental.

Liaison with home visitors is very useful and necessary, as information about special needs, or other issues can be passed on to help the group leader as she meets the family.

As group leaders – and parents who are attending with their second or third baby – have become more familiar with the PEEP curriculum at this level, they have appreciated new information. This has come from recent research, eg into the development of babies' brains and the importance of encouraging responses, especially to familiar voices, loving contact and talking and listening. Music, especially the singing voice of a familiar person, remains a very important and valued aspect within the PEEP groups and at home. Parents have continued to say how gratifying it is and how much babies enjoy their own singing. They often say this with surprise and delight!

Within groups, visual aids and hands on activities have increasingly been used in talking time with carers. These have been more successful than open general discussions. Ideas are fed back to update the session plans. Similarly, group leaders try alternative session books and bring new ideas which influence the delivery, get recorded and used again.

Issues arising at Small PEEP level (for 1s and 2s)
July 2000 will mark the end of the year in which we split the Ones and Twos curriculum. The work of the curriculum group has reflected this transition and refinement to make the guidelines and session plans more appropriate for both

levels. Decisions about appropriate material was decided from evidence from group delivery and from discussion in the curriculum and training group.

PEEP with Ones therefore recognises the importance of understanding one year olds' need to move and explore, their rapidly developing language, which is helped by encouraging them to listen carefully to distinguish between sounds. As in other levels, there is emphasis on the fun and benefits of sharing books and learning through play. The PEEP with Twos acknowledges that difficult behaviour needs managing, that children can be supported through tantrums and that adults can help by being loving and consistent. In addition, practical activities for things to do at home were created and piloted, prior to their inclusion in the PEEP publications. This represented the final stage in writing the PEEP curriculum.

Group leaders still work across the two levels, making the logistics of level meetings a challenge. The positive aspects of this are that families have continuity of group leader from one level to the next during what is often quite a challenging time for parents as they deal with their children's behaviour in and outside the group situation. Some families express preferences for group leaders. Others, who have been attending PEEP for more than two years have priorities of their own work schedule, and accept change. The priority for programme delivery has to ensure good and consistent practice across all levels, which is not personality led.

Issues arising at Big PEEP level (for 3s)

Following the decision in Spring 1999 to pilot an alternative to pre-school talking times, a new free standing group was set up in Greater Leys. This means that a parent or carer whose child attends a pre-school has the opportunity to attend a PEEP session at a time that does not coincide with their newly acquired child-care at the pre-school. Numbers in Blackbird Leys and Greater Leys free standing groups, however, continue to be smaller than those in Rose Hill and Littlemore, and very low at this level overall. Pre-school staff also find it difficult to take up available PEEP training. These issues will be a priority for attention in the next year.

Group leaders in Big PEEP have been consulted about ways of extending the PEEP library and, after asking parents, have brought suggestions for new book titles, especially information books, ie about weather, pets, etc.

Five playgroups in the area have a weekly visit from a PEEP group leader who has experience in managing large groups of children and adults. These visits constitute PEEP Circle Times, with songs, rhymes, a story, and play packs and books for all families to borrow. There is time for the group leader to get to know the children by talking and listening and sharing books. All the pre-schools have a set of session books (the stories from the Circle Times) to keep and use.

Issues arising at Nursery PEEP level (for 4s)
During this period the Nursery teachers were trained to be PEEP Group Leaders, so that they were the ones to talk with parents and carers about their children's learning, rather than the previous PEEP group leaders. After two core training events an 8 session course was extremely well attended by the nursery staffs and the PEEP nursery team. Meanwhile the PEEP team continues to support the nurseries themselves while the teachers work with parents.

This development strengthened the PEEP model at Nursery level, extending the possibilities for using PEEP materials in the classes as well as at home. PEEP partnerships between parents and teachers in the Nursery classes of the First Schools are, for many parents, their first experience of home-school partnership in relation to their child's learning. Schools have the opportunity to build on this relaxed early partnership in the Nursery, seeing it as the foundation for parents' relationships with subsequent teachers and their involvement with school generally as children move up the age range through primary and secondary school.

During this year there has been a revision of the Alphabet Games and the session plans for the Nursery level. Some notable additions have also been made to Songs and Rhymes for Fours.

Network PEEP
Mailings of current publications were as follows:

		Summer 99	Autumn 99	Spring 00
Baby Level	1st mailing	47	66	45
	2nd mailing	53	43	70
	3rd mailing	46	34	21
Ones	1st mailing	-	66	59
	2nd mailing	-	-	69

PEEP LINK
PEEP LINK has developed from an embryo of an idea called Network PEEP. It is now a major new wing of PEEP's programme delivery which has been facilitated by the advent of Sure Start. PEEP LINK's first aim is to provide effective and appropriate access to the PEEP curriculum for *all* parents in the catchment area, in order to encourage the widest possible participation. Its second aim is to integrate PEEP provision so that parents can move easily between the two main types of delivery: groups and 'home' LINK. At its core are two ideas: the importance of republishing the PEEP curriculum to maximise accessibility; and the importance of personal contact in delivering PEEP effectively. The latter was made clear by the lack of positive response to Network PEEP, in which our current publications are simply posted to parents at home.

After much thought in the Senior Management Team and consultation within the project and with the PEEP Trustees and Advisory Group, PEEP LINK has taken the following form:

- All parents will receive a Welcome to PEEP pack soon after the birth of their baby, consisting of an introductory audio song tape, and a folded card in colour, introducing PEEP and containing the words of the songs.

- Parents who go to groups will then receive their publications from their group leader, while LINK parents will receive theirs as part of an annual home visit. They will be given the folder for the appropriate level, along with the current season, the songbook and the tape. LINK home visits will include an introduction to the publications and a chance to discuss the development of that particular child; book-sharing and a chance to try an activity with their child; and information on local services and opportunities.

- As personal contact is considered very important for the accessibility of the publications, while subsequent seasons' material will be initially posted to LINK parents, PEEP plans to introduce delivery by a network of volunteer parents from PEEP groups. This will not only provide personal contact with a local parent, but also ease the passage between group and link provision. Fours will receive their PEEP publications from their nursery classes. All PEEP children will receive a birthday card each year until their fifth birthday.

The opportunities that Sure Start affords to work collaboratively with other agencies will facilitate this work enormously. PEEP LINK will be introduced, level by level, from July 2000. During the summer of 2000 the Management Team is working hard to put everything in place that is needed, from LINK visitor capacity and training, to information and administrative systems; as well as bringing the curriculum to publication and developing the LINK visit contents for each level.

Planning the implementation of PEEP LINK in the Management Team has involved investigating the workload capacity and interest of group leaders in this new development. Group leaders have been offered the opportunity to take up LINK visiting as part of their role. However, the new structure of work balance – between running groups and home visiting with publications, will need careful planning as we move into the next phase, to ensure quality of existing group delivery as well as effective home visits. Training is to start Summer Term 2000 in how and what is to be covered in LINK visits.

A volunteer network will be drawn from the parents in the groups, in order to deliver the second and third seasons' material for each level to families not attending groups. Parents will receive training and on-going support in the same way as staff. This is a project in itself, which will be planned in the course of the summer. Monitoring and evaluation of LINK will also be planned in some detail.

(vi) RESOURCES

PEEP resources library

The PEEP resources library needs to be kept up-to-date. 200 books were added to the library in the Spring Term, mostly for baby and small PEEP. An average of 40 books and 30 packs are lost from the project each term as they are not returned by families although every effort is made by PEEP group staff. There are over 300 children in PEEP groups borrowing every term as well as around 80 children in 5 playgroups. In addition to these losses books need replacing as they become worn out. A decision was taken not to replace with the same things unless particularly popular, but to add more variety. Families in the groups were consulted by level co-ordinators and group leaders and the parent user group came up with ideas and suggestions which will be used in the Summer Term 2000 as the basis of increasing the library and adding to the PEEP packs. After a very successful pilot this term of putting books in packs for 2-year olds, 20 PEEP packs for 3-year olds have been identified that can be re-labelled for 2-year olds, and more packs with books will be created for 1 and 2-year olds.

The Resources Assistant attended a course on play and toy libraries organised by the National Association of Toy Libraries.

Resources in PEEP groups

In the Autumn Term 1999 a total of 1165 books and 885 packs were borrowed by children in PEEP groups. This is an average of 6 books and/or packs per child.

Books are still being given to children in PEEP groups at the end of every term up to and including Summer 2000. This is extremely popular. Some of the titles given over the last year include:

Babies	♦ Mr Bear says a spoonful for you ♦ Tickle, Tickle ♦ Baby Goz ♦ Sleepy Time the Playsongs
Ones and Twos	♦ Spots Birthday Party ♦ Mr Gumpy's Outing ♦ So Much ♦ Very Hungry Caterpillar ♦ Who's that? ♦ Lifesize Animal Counting Book ♦ Are you asleep rabbit? ♦ What happens next?
Threes	♦ Rosie's Babies ♦ The Shopping Basket ♦ The Bear under the Stairs ♦ Enormous Turnip

Library systems with bar code swipe facility are being investigated. Our current system of index cards is too cumbersome and time-consuming – both for Group Leaders logging items in and out, and for the Resources Assistant to be able to keep track of stock and account for losses. Information has been received from four companies that produce appropriate systems. These will be assessed.

Resources in playgroups
PEEP packs are available to borrow for all of the families attending a morning session in 5 playgroups. A total of 84 children in these playgroups have borrowed 209 packs – an average of 2.5 packs per child. The afternoon sessions in 2 of these playgroups will have this facility from Summer Term 2000.

Resources in nurseries
Resources have been supplied to 2 more nurseries. Each one has been provided with 60 books and 30 PEEP packs for lending to families, and 30 books are used in PEEP sessions in the Nursery. A total of 8 nurseries have now been set up in this way.

Continued requests were being made by the nurseries for more books, their existing stock of books needed to be complemented in some way – a library of books cannot be a one-off static stock and PEEP cannot operate with limited, worn out resources.

To provide them with more variety 8 boxes of 15 books each have been put together by taking books from the PEEP library that were appropriate for 4-year olds, too old for PEEP group children of up 3 years and not required by PEEP groups. These boxes will be rotated around the 8 nurseries to provide variety. In addition every term the 8 nurseries will be able to order up to 10 books a term from PEEP at half the cover price.

Across the 8 nurseries 70% of children have borrowed at least once in the Spring Term 2000, and 43% borrowed 5 or more books and/or packs. In one of the new nurseries 96% of children borrowed at least once.

Training library
This small library continues to have new books added, and is displayed in the meeting room. It is available for PEEP staff and for people on the PEEP evening training.

(vii) DISSEMINATION

The completion of the Handbook has been an achievement that has been very instrumental in the increasing coherence and confidence in PEEP to embark on dissemination at the end of its first phase.

Approximately 290 reports for the year 1998 –1999 were distributed, all as a result of individual requests or personal contacts, or as a result of conferences or seminars where there was a PEEP presentation.

PEEP publications will be available (for a charge) to a range of audiences:

Local dissemination
The publications will be a way of making the content of PEEP explicit to other providers of services to PEEP families. In addition, some providers running groups in other parts of the county have requested PEEP material and this is envisaged as another area for dissemination.
National dissemination
It is also intended that the publications will be available nationally both as they stand, and as part of a package of training and support. The dissemination objective of PEEP's Phase 2 entails being available to others wishing to work with parents in this way.
International dissemination
Queries have been received from Australia, Portugal and the US. It seems likely that PEEP will continue to be asked for its materials in this way as they are developed.

Visitors' days
These have been running every month in term time, and have been well attended. The days run from 9 am until 3 pm, with a presentation about PEEP in the middle of the day. Before and after this, visitors are welcome to visit groups, or to attend workshops chosen from the following selection:

- Curriculum and publications
- Information management systems
- PEEP and Sure Start
- PEEP in Schools
- Project planning and funding
- Recruitment and community
- Research
- Resources
- Staff training, support and development

Evaluation sheets completed by participants have been very positive.

(viii) SYSTEMS

Information management and ICT systems
FileMaker Pro was updated to be Year 2000 compliant and the millennium passed by without a hiccup. In the absence of the Resources and Systems Co-ordinator, a PEEP mother who had worked in the ICT field before starting her

family gave advice to PEEP's Director, and also to Sure Start's Director, about the PEEP database in the PEEP office, Sure Start's requirements for their own database, and Sure Start's data protection registration.

In response to need, a wide range of new IT equipment has been set up and is working correctly in the PEEP offices along with a file structure, back up procedures, templates and defaults. Users have been instructed and trained. Antiviral software is installed and kept up to date on all PCs. IT systems have been expanded to cover 3 sites with 11 PCs, 3 portables, 3 printers, 3 backup systems and 1 scanner. There are now 2 networks with servers and 2 internet/e-mail set ups. This represents a large increase in IT facilities, along with an increase in the number of users, and means that the support requirements have increased substantially. PEEP has been registered as a domain name. Our web address is www.peep.org.uk.

Procedures to make life easier for PC users have been put in place:

- House style and other templates
- Procedures for the annual report, handbook and newsletter have been set up

PC training needs identified have been met by the Cowley Training Centre: Project Assistant on Excel, Resources Assistant on Publisher, Director's Assistant on Advanced Word documents.

The Centre Administrator has taken on day-to-day management of:

- The database, the termly cycle of administrative work, data entry and printing of reports, LINK mailing etc
- Housekeeping of files on the network, including files of exiting staff. Backing up.
- PC problem-solving and user support, IT orders and calls for external support
- IT administration - keeping records of hardware, software, licence agreements and upgrades

Time is needed to consolidate the development of systems and the management of information that will ensure that Peers PEEP can operate smoothly beyond its initial first five-year phase. The Resources and Systems Co-ordinator will need to work towards handing on the management of systems to other staff.

As a result of the increase in IT systems, additional staffing is required to cover PC technical support and network maintenance. The Centre Administrator is taking on a lot of this work and will need additional training. It is essential for

PEEP as a fast moving and developing project to have strong IT/systems/database/communications expertise. It is these elements that allow for fast and efficient movement and will be essential for the dissemination of PEEP.

(ix) PERSONNEL, CENTRE MANAGEMENT AND PREMISES

Thirteen appointments were made during the year, to the following posts:
(** indicates newly created post)

- Project Assistant
- Centre Administrator
- Director's Assistant **
- PEEP Nursery Team **(3 teachers)
- Cleaner for PEEP Training Cabin **
- Group Leaders (2)
- Group Assistants (4)

The continued growth and development of the project has had many implications for personnel management in PEEP. There have been a number of comings and goings. The year began with two new appointments: the Centre Administrator and the Project Assistant, who between them provide for the smooth running of the PEEP Centre and the administrative systems that the programme delivery relies on. Other new appointments this year include the Director's Assistant, a new Group Leader and a team of three nursery teachers to work in PEEP nurseries (funded by the local Education Action Zone).

As part of a restructuring of group staff, in September 1999 Group Leaders and Level Co-ordinators were able to move from termly to annual contracts working a minimum of fifteen hours a week. Two Group Leaders left PEEP. The Early Years Literacy Play Adviser took up her new post as Oxfordshire Adviser for 0s – 3s, and the Publications Assistant position came to a natural end with the exciting move towards publishing our curriculum materials 'out of house'.

In terms of personnel development, the project needs to look forward to its second phase from September 2000 onwards, and offer staff the opportunity to develop their current positions in the light of future needs and consider the challenges of new roles within PEEP. The project is currently recruiting to a number of new positions, some of which arise from the introduction of PEEP LINK.

Personnel policies and procedures continued to be revised and developed. A revised Health and Safety policy has successfully been put in place and implemented for all PEEP premises, for PEEP group staff and home visiting staff. Competent persons have been identified and trained and a Health and Safety team has been established.

As PEEP has grown and become more complex, it has become necessary to develop slightly more formal channels of communication, such as weekly information meetings and notes. It is a great achievement that the PEEP Handbook is now in place, as a point of reference for all aspects of our practice. It is to be updated regularly.

PEEP staff now work on three different sites on the Peers Campus: the PEEP Centre, the PEEP Offices (now shared with the Sure Start Director and her assistant) and the new PEEP Cabins. The PEEP Cabins were provided by the LEA, and have enabled PEEP to run groups and training events on the premises, and to house the Learning Bridge pending their relocation in Community Education. During the summer of 1999, a much needed but inevitably disruptive reorganisation of people and work across the three premises was achieved. Security continues to be a priority; after a series of break-ins, security in the PEEP Centre in particular has been strengthened. Premises are an on-going concern in the project, with the work expanding considerably faster than our ability to find the space in which to do it.

A Human Resources Co-ordinator was appointed in February to start in May.

(x) COMMUNITY AND SURE START

PEEP and the community
Much has been done with other local providers to promote awareness of PEEP's work. During the period covered by this report this has included:

- Organisation of information stands and story sessions at community events
- Liaison and planning with organisations working with young families in the PEEP catchment area in both the statutory and voluntary sector
- Membership of Blackbird Leys CDI Under 8's Sub-committee with joint responsibility for policy and strategy. In the absence of a project co-ordinator, individual supervision of the team's outreach worker.
- Attendance at Blackbird Leys Under Fives liaison and planning meetings
- Co-ordinating and editing the PEEP Newsletter, involving close collaboration with parents
- Support to the new Learning Bridge ESOL group for PEEP parents, through outreach work which takes place on recruitment visits
- Membership of the Sure Start Steering Group, and all the Sure Start Working Groups: Buildings; Children's Learning and Care; Community Involvement; Health and Home Visiting Networks; Management Development
- Promotion of Equal Opportunities updating of community contacts register

Major developmental areas this year have been:

1) Planning for PEEP LINK including the home visiting programme, maximising the opportunities for collaborating with other providers that arise as a result of Sure Start
2) Management support for the Learning Bridge team over the main period and at the conclusion of the grant period

Learning Bridge project

This project, which was established in 1999 to support PEEP parents to continue with their own learning and personal development, ended in its present form in April 2000. During the past year over 100 parents had individual Guidance Interviews and over 90 attended 11 courses or Learning Opportunities which were set up by Learning Bridge. These included the PEEP Training, Sociology, Next Step, ESOL (in partnership with Blackbird Leys CDI), "Who Said Kids were Easy?", and a newly OCN accredited Child Health Course. These last two were organised in partnership with the WEA, while the Child Health was developed with PEEP parents. Visits were also organised to the ABLE Open Learning Centre in Blackbird Leys, and several of those students have now achieved qualifications in computing. Many students have progressed on to further study in the city, particularly to the Certificate in Sessional Crèche Work.

For 30% of students, Learning Bridge courses were their first experience of formal learning since leaving school, and 54% of students left school at aged 17 or younger.

PEEP now has a training room and crèche – approved by the Social Services – which enables parents to take part in activities knowing that their children are being well cared for close by. After Easter, the Learning Bridge will continue on the Peers School Campus, under the auspices of Community Education.

Sure Start

Working with Sure Start is a major commitment and advantage for PEEP; both for the joint development of PEEP and Sure Start, and as a means of dissemination. This work enables PEEP both to work better and to do more. It offers a new element to the Birth to School study which now includes families within the PEEP area (Blackbird Leys and Greater Leys) and families in the PEEP + Sure Start area (Rose Hill-Littlemore). It highlights PEEPs aims and identity to enquirers who may know about Sure Start but not about PEEP and makes it easier for us to explain the rationale for our work. Rose Hill-Littlemore Sure Start will provide an opportunity to develop the best possible play provision as a resource for the area – and finally our involvement in Sure Start is helpful in the effort to secure funding from other sources for PEEP's continued existence.

Currently PEEP is the voluntary body lead partner for Sure Start, with the PEEP Trustees as the accountable body. When the Sure Start Steering Group is

replaced by a Management Board (towards the end of 2000) there will no longer be the need for a lead partner and PEEP will cease to function in that respect. Frequent and detailed reporting arrangements to Sure Start in relation to PEEP's Service Level Agreement have been set up as requested by the Sure Start Unit.

Meanwhile planning has gone ahead for the new Sure Start Family Centre for Rose Hill and Littlemore, with the PEEP Deputy Director's particular involvement in the design of the Playroom for parents and children together, and Crèche. PEEP staff contribute to all the Rose Hill-Littlemore Sure Start Working Groups, and there is a great deal of enthusiasm and commitment for the development of this Sure Start programme and PEEP's relationship with it.

(xi) EVALUATION AND RESEARCH

The PEEP Research Consortium, chaired by Professor Kathy Sylva, has continued to meet throughout the year on a monthly basis. The two main studies – Birth to School and the Big PEEP study – have been the main work of the Consortium, both of which are on schedule. In December funding was granted by the DfEE for both the NFER Birth to School study and for an extension to the Oxford University Department for Educational Studies Big PEEP study, in order to study the outcomes of Nursery PEEP also. This very exciting commitment by the government to PEEP means that the PEEP research is now secure, and that the final report of the longitudinal study will be available in 2004. There will also be annual interim reports.

Planning for an evaluation of the publications and of PEEP LINK has also taken place. This is due to begin in January 2001.

(xii) INCOME AND EXPENDITURE

The Finance Officer and Assistant have worked on new systems for accounting and reporting, which are now greatly improved in order to manage the increasing volume of work.

Funding until March 2002 is now secure. A variety of funding applications has been made for the period 2002 – 2005 in order to complete Phase 2 and carry the work over into Phase 3. This work has taken up an enormous amount of the Director's time during the year.

Details of income and expenditure for the year covered by this report can be found at section 5, with the budget for 2000 – 2001 at section 6.

3. Difficulties, adjustments, policy issues

It will be clear that much work has been completed as planned in the year covered by this report. However some things had to be delayed or adjusted, as follows:

(a) WHOLE PROJECT PLANNING AND REVIEW

- EAZ and PEEP relationship at Nursery Level (4s).
- SURE START and PEEP relationship for Baby, Small and Big Levels (0s – 3s).
- Job description reviews

The relationship between EAZ and PEEP in relation to PEEP in the schools has been more complex than originally envisaged, mainly because of the varied, demanding and sometimes contradictory expectations of schools which are the context in which PEEP works. Various issues have been satisfactorily resolved, and discussions continue with the aim of maximising the support that PEEP can offer to schools.

Job description reviews have been incorporated into a wider reaching review of responsibilities and pay in the project and are therefore taking slightly longer than envisaged. PEEP is receiving voluntary help with this from a very experienced local resident who is working with the new Human Resources Co-ordinator and the Deputy Director. The work should be completed by July 2000.

(b) CURRICULUM AND TRAINING

- Publications: total curriculum material complete for all five levels, including audio tapes and accompanying songbooks, and Welcome card and tape
- PEEP for 3s and 4s: strategies for involving more parents and carers as well as staff in settings

Although much thought and consultation undoubtedly went into the task of publishing the PEEP materials, this piece of work has in some ways proved more complex and problematic than was originally envisaged. Apart from the sheer complexity of publishing five 'volumes' at once, two events occurred which resulted in some delay. Firstly the Resources and Systems Co-ordinator who was project managing the publications was away from work for the greater part of the Autumn term due to ill health; and secondly the need to re-appoint designers meant a delay of a few weeks. At one stage it seemed possible that both the publications themselves and the start of PEEP LINK as a means of delivering them to non-group families might be delayed beyond the end of Phase 1 (August 2000) and into Phase 2. However there has been a degree of catch-up and the date for completion of the publications project is now October 2000, so only a

month will have been lost. Meanwhile LINK is being started gradually from July 2000 onwards.

It is thought likely that the advent of publications will make a significant and positive difference to the involvement of more parents and carers as well as staff in settings for 3s and 4s. During the past year the energies of staff in this area have been concentrated on the nursery classes and on the curriculum for 4s, leaving less time than was envisaged for addressing the needs of Big PEEP (for 3s). This work is now urgent and will be taken forward with the appointment of a new 3s and 4s Co-ordinator who will, all being well, take up post in September.

(e) EVALUATION AND RESEARCH

- Formative evaluation of PEEP LINK
- Interim outcomes

The planning for the formative evaluation of PEEP LINK has gone ahead as planned, but the implementation has been slightly delayed. This is partly as a result of the slightly later starting date for LINK, but also because it now appears better to allow the new initiative to get slightly established rather than start the evaluation on day one. The evaluation is now due to start in January 2001.

Various policy issues have also arisen during the year as follows, and these have had a significant effect on the way in which the work was shaped.

Recent awareness of the importance of services for 0s – 3s and families
There has been a shift in thinking generally about the importance of the very first years in a child's life, from 0 – 3. This has resulted in a variety of adjustments at policy level, including revising the terms of reference for Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships to include 0-3s, and in Oxfordshire the creation of a 0s – 3s Task Group and a County Adviser for 0s - 3s. This new engagement with development in the first years of life has given PEEP a higher profile.

Research findings including brain research
There has been an upsurge of interest in research findings relating to children's learning in the first years of life, and in the development of the brain during this time. Again, this new interest has had a positive effect on the way in which PEEP is perceived, especially by colleagues in related fields.

'Trail blazing' aspect of Sure Start
A great many discussions, meetings and related tasks were generated by PEEP's role as lead partner of a 'trail-blazing' project at a time when the Sure Start Unit was seeking feedback from new projects about the challenges of setting up a Sure Start programme. This was a very fascinating period which, by its innovative nature, had a profound effect on the identity of PEEP as a project that could have something to offer beyond its own immediate area.

The context of early education developments in the UK, especially the new Early Learning Goals

The revision of the Desirable Outcomes and the publication of the Early Learning Goals has been a very welcome development. This new Foundation Stage as a Key Stage in its own right, as important as the other Key Stages, represents a new concept. It offers the opportunity for early years practitioners to develop their settings in ways that can be far more appropriate for the needs of 3s – 6s. The recent Guidance for the Foundation Stage is a very helpful document containing much excellent early education material, reassuringly coherent with PEEP's philosophy and principles.

A PEEP philosophy

During this year the philosophy by which PEEP operates and which characterises its identity has been articulated by the staff and built into the planning for the future. The nine elements of the philosophy are:

1. Parents are their children's first and most important educators
2. Unconditional acceptance of each individual person is essential for inclusion
3. Universal provision of PEEP is aimed at making an impact on *all* families with young children
4. Expectations of realising the full potential of children are not lowered
5. Self-esteem - in children and adults - profoundly affects the disposition and ability to learn
6. *How* children and adults learn is a focus of PEEP
7. Play is absolutely central to children's learning processes
8. Life-long learning - by staff and by parents and carers - is crucial to supporting the development of children's life-long learning dispositions
9. A sense of community underpins the work of PEEP

The challenge of premises needs

The need to locate adequate premises for the work planned for Phase 2 has occupied considerable time and thought. Since the start of the project in 1995 there has always been an element of uncertainty about whether there will be enough ..... enough good staff, enough premises, enough money to run the project. These uncertainties have been manageable thus far but they remain a challenge to further development; and premises remains the *most* challenging in a variety of ways - including suitability of location, security and insurance, and simply availability.

Managing the volume of work

Finally with the increased complexity of PEEP, managing the volume of work has proved the most difficult issue for all members of the Management Team over the recent period. In the last two end of term reviews to identify achievements and challenges, the issue of overload has been by far the greatest threat to the efficient development and running of the programme. There is a danger that the

reflective practice that is so crucial to the management of change and effective development could be significantly overwhelmed by the volume of urgent tasks. Employing better teamwork and relentlessly prioritising important but non-urgent tasks are ways in which this situation may be contained.

4. The wider context

PEEP has made an impact in the wider field during the year in a variety of ways, including:

- Contributions to national and government conferences and seminars
- Inclusion in Basic Skills Agency and Sure Start 'manuals' of good practice
- Monthly PEEP Visitors' Days – these have been developed effectively over the year
- House of Commons Select Committee Review of Early Education
- Various visitors to PEEP including Margaret Hodge (MP, Minister); Naomi Eisenstadt and Sylvia Thompson (Sure Start); Kevin Fell (Professor of Education, Melbourne Australia)

During 1999-2000 the number of visitors on these days totalled 75. The list below shows where they came from.

May
Family Network Group, Hadleigh, Essex
Coventry City Council, Support and Advisory Service, Education Dept
June
Lewisham Education and Community Services, Early Years Service
Barnardo's Northern Ireland
East Tyrone College of FE
July
Fast Centre, Bootle
October
Visitors from Sweden – teachers, social workers, health visitors etc
Professor from St Agnes' College, Osaka, Japan
November
Oxfordshire Social Services (Witney)
Jigsaw Group (Swindon)
Rowland Hill Centre for Childhood (London)
Community Education Service (Bristol)
January
Reading Quest (Oxford)
Oxford University Department for Educational Studies
Rowland Hill Centre for Childhood (London)
Didcot Community Education, Oxon
St James & St Agnes Nursery School (Bristol)

Ashley Road Day Nursery (Bristol)
March
Parents As First Teachers
Tilbury Health Centre, Essex (Community Mothers Programme)
CHUFF, Hardwick CP School (Banbury)
Bristol Community Education
Swindon LEA
Derby City LEA
Sure Start Knowle (Bristol)
Central Community Nursery School (Derby)
Church Cowley St James First School (Oxford)

The following comments were made by visitors on their evaluation sheets:

'Very useful to actually visit PEEP in action and to be able to talk to parents and group leader.'

'Thank you very much. I have had a wonderful day and I am convinced that Derby is on the right track.'

'A busy day – lots of information to take on board!'

'I think visitors' days are really valuable and enjoyable.'

'Thank you very much. Lots packed in to a relatively short time. Very useful – you make it sound achievable. Thank you!'

'I liked the pace and the mixture of activities in the babies group and also the way that parents' contributions were valued.'

'Thanks for a very nice day, and I would very much like to keep updated on how your future plans are going...'

'I really enjoyed the group work with the mothers and babies. It was obvious that they enjoyed it very much too.'

'Really enjoyed the workshops and the groups were wonderful.'

'I really liked the atmosphere...'

'Very useful, thought provoking and inspiring.'

5. Financial statement for April 1999 – March 2000

PEEP Income and Expenditure Account
1999/2000

Heading	Actual £
Income	
Esmée Fairbairn	400,000
Hamilton Trust	50,000
Gatsby	15,000
NIACE	44,272
SRB Heart of England	15,800
Tudor Trust	35,000
Sure Start SLA	23,500
Other Income	6,310
Sub Total Income	**589,882**
Expenditure	
Staffing incl Consultancy	209,822
NFER	15,263
Family Recruitment & Home Visits	3,058
Programme Development	1,695
Group Running Costs (all levels)	78,075
Other Activities	5,646
Group Resources	4,319
Staff Recruitment	2,450
Staff Development	10,444
Meetings	361
Centre Running Costs	32,200
Information Management	6,778
Building Work	10,070
Miscellaneous	1,750
Sure Start Development Costs	2,036
Learning Bridge project (NIACE)	36,250
Sub Total Expenditure	420,217
Grand Total of Income over Expenditure	169,665

6. Outline plans for Phase 2 (2000 – 2005)

The new aim:
PEEP aims to bring about a significant improvement in educational achievement – especially in literacy – by whole communities of children, from their birth; through working with the important adults - mainly their parents - who live and work with them.

The six objectives:

1. **Peers PEEP**

Peers Early Education Partnership (PEEP) was set up in 1995 to make a positive impact on the literacy levels of students entering Peers School and thus improve their life chances. Research studies have shown that long-term gains in educational attainment are most likely to be made when children have the benefit of high-quality early childhood education together with parental involvement. Consequently it was decided that an early intervention offered the greatest chance of success, with a focus on work with parents and carers to support their children's learning from birth to school entry. This is why PEEP works, mainly with parents but also with carers and in pre-school settings, to support very early learning.

First and foremost PEEP is about making a difference in the Peers area. It is also essential for PEEP's dissemination and replication that Peers PEEP, at all the five levels, continues to run as an exemplar of good practice that can generate a range of training services. This secondary 'exemplar' purpose of Peers PEEP is also an additional motivator for sustaining development and quality in Peers PEEP itself.

Running Peers PEEP in its new LINK form as effectively as possible is the first priority for Phase 2.

2. **Sure Start**

Having contributed to setting up Sure Start in the PEEP area, Peers PEEP will, in its new LINK form, be a strong element of the Rose Hill-Littlemore Sure Start programme. A member of PEEP's Management Team works in a double role as a member also of the Sure Start team. Other PEEP contributions to Sure Start are made by various PEEP staff through their membership of Rose Hill-Littlemore Sure Start Working Groups.

Sure Start operates in one-third of Peers PEEP's catchment area, and will have a significant positive effect both on the ways in which PEEP can develop work with other agencies, as well as the development of the PEEP LINK programme itself. It offers a wonderful opportunity for the development of collaborative planning, implementation and evaluation our joint work with families in the Sure Start/PEEP area of Rose Hill-Littlemore.

3. Research

In Phase 1 (1995 – 2000) the PEEP model was developed and piloted. It will be essential in Phase 2 to make explicit what exactly constitutes the model; whether it makes a difference; if so, to what extent; and as far as possible to show in what ways the difference is made. It is acknowledged that this task is extremely complex, and that it may prove problematic to gain conclusive answers to all these questions. Nonetheless it will be essential to make the best possible attempt to gain as much evidence as possible of PEEP outcomes. Evidence of positive outcomes are needed in order to underpin the rationale for making PEEP more widely accessible, with public funding.

The proposal for a new building block in education for 0-3s, with PEEP as a contributor, cannot be argued effectively without research evidence. The Nursery Study by the Oxford University Department for Educational Studies and the Birth to School Study by the National Foundation for Educational Research have been set up and funded by the DfEE, and provide the opportunity to collect this evidence.

4. Dissemination

PEEP dissemination - making PEEP materials and PEEP training available to organisations elsewhere in the UK and further afield - will provide support to individuals and groups in other areas who are working to support babies' and young children's learning, communication and relationships with their parents and other important people.

This fourth objective will support the development of new or existing services in other areas. Such services would not claim to be models of PEEP, but would be likely to share common aims. No attempt at quality control will be made by PEEP, although where possible information would be gathered in relation to take-up, implementation and outcomes. The information would support PEEP in developing the ability to meet needs effectively, and would allow for the possibility for dissemination to develop into replication where all criteria for replication had been met (see below).

The use of the Internet would be one likely route for disseminating publications and advertising services. It will be important to monitor the destination of publications and services.

It is hoped that the use of PEEP publications and resources will result in significantly positive outcomes. However where projects make use of some but not all of the PEEP publications and services and where they are not underpinned by training, support, monitoring and accreditation, they could not claim to be 'doing PEEP', nor to expect the same outcomes as Peers PEEP.

It will be a principle of the dissemination objective that as soon as possible it should be self-financing.

5. Replication

The replication objective is to demonstrate that the PEEP model can be successfully reproduced in other parts of the country. This will involve support, monitoring, quality control and accreditation. The criteria for replicated PEEPs (for instance - and hypothetically - Slough PEEP or Bristol PEEP, as distinct from Peers PEEP) would be characterised by their adherence to the philosophy and principles of Peers PEEP and would be eligible for accreditation as models of PEEP.

Unlike dissemination, replication would involve specific initial training (a Higher Education Certificate is in the process of being set up) as well as ongoing support and monitoring. It would be appropriate for replicated PEEPs to adopt the same intended outcomes as Peers PEEP, and these would need to be monitored and evaluated. A list of accredited PEEP programmes could be made public on the internet so that it would be a straightforward matter to check validity.

While this objective in Phase 2 is to *test* replication and there will therefore be a pilot stage in which certain aspects would be subsidised by Peers PEEP, it will be a principle of replication that as soon as possible it should be self-financing.

The work of dissemination will be taken forward by a national development officer, whose key objectives will be to develop and implement a business plan, set up and manage a web site, network with other national organisations and develop the organisational aspect of training services.

6. Exit strategy funding

The first five years of PEEP (1995 – 2000) were funded by a combination of charitable trusts and the Challenge Fund, amounting to approximately £1.3m. The aim of this phase was to develop and pilot a successful, sustainable and transferable model. This was the kind of work that charitable trusts were willing to 'seed-corn' fund in order to generate an innovative intervention in an area of need.

The PEEP model has been developed and piloted; but questions relating to its effectiveness, sustainability and transferability have yet to be answered. The objectives of PEEP Phase 2 are to provide the answers to those questions. Can Peers PEEP continue to develop and thrive in a changing context? How successful has it been in achieving its intended outcomes? Is it transferable?

While these questions remain to be answered it would not be appropriate to expect public funding to be committed to the PEEP programme in the long-term. However the DfEE has agreed to fund the research on Peers PEEP outcomes, as well as elements of PEEP work as they relate to Sure Start, and it is hoped that various trusts will agree to make available the remaining funding needed for Phase 2.

By the end of Phase 2 (2005) it is anticipated that these questions will have been resolved. There may then be evidence to show that Peers PEEP is still thriving and that it has made a significant positive difference; that its dissemination has positively supported related work in other disadvantaged areas; and that it has been shown to be transferable. These outcomes would constitute a very strong argument for long-term public funding of PEEP, possibly for a generation until PEEP babies become PEEP parents themselves. This is the cycle of deprivation that PEEP was set up to break, by raising literacy levels so that all secondary students in the PEEP area could access the same life chances as those enjoyed by young people in more advantaged areas.

While PEEP dissemination and replication would be self-supporting by the end of Phase 2, the programme itself can never by its nature – free for all families - be so. If there *is* a strong argument for long-term public funding PEEP could not - and should not - be further sustained by charitable funding. The exit strategy funding objective is to secure commitment to public funding for Peers PEEP in the long-term as a 'normal' public service in this area of disadvantage, and as a means of generating and supporting similar work in other disadvantaged areas.

7. Conclusion

A group of colleagues from Higher Education, Public Health, the Local Education Authority, retired HMI and PEEP met recently to consider the rationale for continuing PEEP in the Peers School area as a 'generation' project over, say, a further twenty-five years. To do this would mean that PEEP would be available to the 0s – 4s currently in the project who remain in the area if they themselves become parents.

In the wide-ranging discussion some recurring themes emerged including the importance of a long-term approach to this kind of work, together with the advisability of attempting to identify what are the factors in the programme that make the most difference. A new focus seems to be emerging on the possibility of significant outcomes in parents and carers of PEEP children which would impact positively on parenting skills, community capacity and social inclusion factors. Transition to a 'generation' project would of course rely on the continuation of the current programme at its present level until 2005, for which funding is being sought.

Over the last year Peers PEEP has continued to develop; it has gained a positive reputation beyond its own area; there is anecdotal qualitative evidence that PEEP is making a positive difference to children and their families; discussions are taking place in relation to disseminating and replicating PEEP; and opportunities are arising to enable the argument for public funding to go forward.

These factors indicate that the 'vision' of a generation project to support families with the youngest children in disadvantaged areas may possibly be an appropriate important objective to pursue in the future.

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June 2000

Appendix 1: PEEP Trustees, Management Team, and Advisory Group

PEEP TRUSTEES

Sir Colin McColl: *Retired senior civil servant*
Michael O'Regan: *Businessman and school governor*
Rosemary Peacocke: *Formerly HM Staff Inspector for the Early Years*
Ken Brooks: *Lawyer*
Bernard Clarke: *Secondary school headteacher*
Chris Dark: *Peers Upper School headteacher*

MANAGEMENT TEAM

Rosemary Roberts OBE: *Director*
Anna Edwards: *Deputy Director*
Teresa Harvey: *Resources and Systems Co-ordinator*
Deidre Macfarlane: *Recruitment and Community Co-ordinator*
Janet Sly: *Human Resources Co-ordinator*
Alison Street: *Programme Delivery Co-ordinator*

In addition, PEEP has the benefit of regular advice from its Advisory Group which includes the following people:

Professor Ronald Arnold: *Formerly HM Staff Inspector for Teacher Training, Secretary to the Bullock Committee, consultant to the National Foundation for Educational Research*

Sir Christopher Ball: *Adviser to the Esmée Fairbairn Charitable Trust*

Dr Greg Brooks: *National Foundation for Educational Research*

Julie Fisher: *Schools Adviser (Early Years Specialist), Oxfordshire LEA*

Professor Philip Gammage: *Professor of Early Childhood Research, de Lissa Institute of Early Childhood and Family Studies, University of South Australia*

Jill Head: *Primary Inspector*

Jim Hewitt: *Blackbird Leys Community Worker*

Prof. John Howson: *Education Consultant*

Penelope Hughes-Hallett: *Trustee, The Esmée Fairbairn Charitable Trust*

Dr. Aidan Macfarlane: *Consultant in Public Health and Health Policy, Oxfordshire Health Authority, and Senior Clinical Lecturer in Paediatrics, Oxford University*

Neil McClelland: *Director, National Literacy Trust*

Professor Ruth Merttens: *Professor of Primary Maths at the University of St. John and St. Mark, Plymouth; director IMPACT Maths at the University of North London; Co-director of the Hamilton Maths and Reading Projects*

Dr Gillian Pugh OBE: *Chief Executive, Coram Family*

Teresa Smith: *Director, Department of Applied Social Studies and Social Research, Oxford University*

Professor Kathy Sylva: *Oxford University Department of Educational Studies*

Appendix 2: Information about PEEP

Information about PEEP

Peers Early Education Partnership (PEEP) was formed in 1995 as a result of the determination by a governor of Peers School - Michael O'Regan - to make a positive impact on the literacy levels of students entering the school and thus improve their life chances. In the preceding years, he and Bernard Clarke (headteacher of Peers School) had set up a small Steering Group which gave much thought to how this might best be done. The group had developed plans on how an early intervention could offer the greatest chance of success, with a focus on work with parents and carers to support their children's learning from birth to school entry.

During 1995-6 various issues needed to be resolved. Over a period of time the following decisions were taken:

- to offer universal provision rather than targeting certain families, using all strategies available to reach and retain as many families as possible; especially by careful recruitment and by developing appropriate and flexible delivery
- to make equal opportunities issues a major priority throughout the project
- explicitly to recognise and value parents' and carers' prior efforts and achievements; and to develop accreditation for parents and carers for their work with their children
- to develop a curriculum based on the study of educational and psychological theory, research and best practice
- to adopt a group-based approach
- to deliver the programme by carefully trained staff, locally recruited whenever possible
- to work with other providers to help co-ordinate the support and opportunities available to families with young children
- to invest in research for both formative and summative purposes

PEEP AIM AND RATIONALE

PEEP's aim is to bring about a significant improvement in educational achievement - especially in literacy - by whole communities of children, from their birth through working with their parents and other important adults. This has involved developing a sustainable, transferable model which complements existing pre-school provision.

Research studies have shown that long-term gains in educational attainment are most likely to be made when children have the benefit of high-quality early childhood education together with parental involvement. This is why PEEP works mainly with parents, and also pre-school settings, to support very early learning.

FUNDING

Since 1995 the project has been funded successively by a combination of government grants (Challenge Fund, Sure Start, Family Support Grant), Charitable Trusts – especially The Esmée Fairbairn Charitable Trust and the Lloyds TSB Foundation for England and Wales, other initiatives (for instance The Athens Marathon) and smaller donations. Further funding is being sought to continue Peers PEEP Phase 2 in 2000-2005.

OPERATION

The project is currently offered to a whole population of under-5s and their families in a disadvantaged area of Oxford (Blackbird Leys and surrounding estates). In September 1995 five members of staff began the project, three of them part-time. In those first few months approximately twenty children and their parents were involved in two pilot groups, which were established in order to develop the programme. Gradually more staff were trained and more groups established. In September 1999, 770 children were involved in PEEP, in 30 groups in community venues plus in eight nursery classes using PEEP material with children and parents/carers. At the same time a Sure Start programme - 'Rose Hill-Littlemore Sure Start' - is now operating in one third of PEEP's catchment area, offering opportunities for further development and collaborative working with other agencies.

An enrolment home visit is offered to all families with a new baby at one month. Weekly sessions usually start when a baby is about six weeks. At their first birthday, a baby moves from Baby PEEP into PEEP for Ones, then PEEP for Twos, for Threes, and for Fours. PEEP Link is being developed, which aims to include those families who do not come to groups by offering PEEP publications with a personal contact. There is high take-up of Open College Networks accreditation. The credit is called "Helping Children to Learn at Home" and is offered following a parent's systematic involvement with the PEEP programme over one year.

Rose Hill-Littlemore Sure Start has enabled 'PEEP Link' to be developed, which offers PEEP to families who do not come to groups. It offers the newly published PEEP Guidelines and home activities (the 'Learning Together' series) with home visits and other opportunities for personal contact.

THE PROGRAMME

PEEP recognises that parents want to help their children to do well, and that in all families to a certain extent children are given:

- opportunities to learn
- recognition and valuing of early achievements
- interactions with adults in learning situations
- adult models of literacy and numeracy behaviours, learning strategies, and dispositions.

This 'ORIM' framework (developed by Professor Peter Hannon and his team at the University of Sheffield) provides the PEEP structure for working with adults.

The project focuses on babies' and children's development in the following areas:

- self-esteem
- disposition to learn
- listening
- talking,
- reading
- writing
- numeracy

WHAT HAPPENS IN PEEP?

- **Weekly group sessions** are currently the main component for all the levels 0-5. These run for 33 weeks a year in term-time. At PEEP group sessions parents and carers share ideas and experiences with each other and the group leader, whose role is to offer information and support. The group session consists of welcome time, songs and rhymes, 'talking time', a special story, book-sharing, and borrowing. PEEP Guidelines and 'PEEP at Home' booklets offer ideas and activities for use at home from week to week.
- **Sharing information** between all adults involved; parents mainly in relation to their own children, and PEEP workers mainly about child development and processes of learning. This is done by individual conversations and group discussions, written materials, and possibly video in the future.
- **Parent user groups** for sharing information about parents' responses, ideas, needs and wishes; and about the project's progress and
- **Providing resources** for use at home: guidelines, books, playpacks, and scrap materials for literacy and numeracy related activities; so that all children can have a rich experience of opportunities and interactions at home.
- **Encouraging book ownership** by PEEP children: by providing free programme-related books three times a year; so that children come to value their own books and want to collect more.
- **Encouraging home activities for parents/carers and children**: many ideas about listening, talking and playing together as well as daily book-sharing; guidelines; and sets of PEEP games. Doing these things gives children plenty of opportunities to practise and get better at listening, talking, reading and writing; and at numbers and other maths activities; and to develop children's self-concept in interactions with other 'important' people. Every child's 'Yellow Book' (Personal Child Learning Record, similar in format and philosophy to their red Personal Child Health Record) is an important element in recording parents' involvement and children's progress.
- **Providing group experiences:** for children, to begin to develop important group skills; and for parents and carers who can share mutual support.
- **Offering home visits and PEEP LINK:** making the programme available to families who cannot come to group sessions.
- **Using music:** crucially, to support the development of literacy and numeracy, positive self-concept and dispositions; also to make the groups enjoyable for parents/carers and children; and as a means of managing the groups of adults and children.
- **Using high-quality scrap materials** as a starting point for literacy activities at home, and as a resource for providing play materials.

- **Ensuring knowledge and understanding of letter names and sounds, and numbers 0-10:** through alliterative and numerical songs, rhymes and stories; a wide variety of games and play activities for parents/carers and children; lending books and playpacks which focus on letters and numbers; and through especially written letter-related and number-related songs, visual materials and activities at Big PEEP and Nursery PEEP levels.
- **Modelling:** by showing acceptance of self and others - both adults and children; interactions with children; sharing ideas; book-sharing and story-telling; playing games; sharing songs and rhymes; using scrap materials and play-packs. When their important adults do these things, children want to do them too.
- **Offering accreditation for parents:** nationally recognised OCN accreditation for 'Helping Children to Learn at Home'. An OCN Level One Certificate is awarded to all parents /carers for each year that they make the most of PEEP, assessed by three simple criteria linked to use of the Yellow Book.

PEEP'S PHILOSOPHY AND PRINCIPLES

As the project nears the end of its first phase, its philosophy has been identified by the staff as the underpinning ethos of the work.

1. PEEP's work with children and families is built on a foundation of **unconditional acceptance of each individual** – child or adult – as an important person. All PEEP approaches begin by recognising and valuing prior efforts and achievements; in particular that all parents want the best for their children.

2. PEEP is a **universal provision**, aimed at making an impact on *all* families with young children in a neighbourhood, rather than targeting an identified minority. Working towards this aim - through which PEEP's equal opportunities policies largely find expression - represents PEEP's emphasis on inclusion. Finding and implementing new successful ways of supporting 'hard-to-reach families will always be a priority.

3. **Self-esteem** - in children and adults - profoundly affects the disposition and ability to learn, and the way in which they live and work with others. Sharing common aspirations and goals brings people together. Appropriate boundaries are important for everyone. Mutual experiences of appreciation, pleasure, trust, respect and love make a profoundly important impact on levels of confidence and self-esteem.

4. Children and adults learn in a variety of ways, especially through first-hand experience, talk and reflection. The PEEP programme - including staff training - has developed from an on-going **study of educational and psychological theory, research and best practice**; it particularly reflects the writings of Lev Vygotsky, Jean Piaget, Jerome Bruner, and Carl Rogers, and the work of Peter Hannon and Judy Dunne.

5. For children, **play** is absolutely central to the learning process. Adults' observation and interaction are crucially important. 'Doing PEEP' means adults and children talking, listening, playing, singing and sharing books together every day. PEEP adds early musical and mathematical experiences to its multi-faceted support for literacy development in the knowledge that these are connected to subsequent learning outcomes.

6. The concept of **life-long learning** - both for staff and for parents and carers - is crucial to supporting children's learning successfully. This concept can find expression in a wide variety of ways; from the emphasis on learning from birth, to staff as reflective practitioners with on-going training and support, to parents pursuing their own learning at the same time as they support children's learning.

7. Building **a sense of community** underpins the work of PEEP: in families, in PEEP groups, and in the neighbourhoods where people live. Through the groups, PEEP aims to foster a sense of mutual understanding and support between all who come; and by building up confidence, knowledge, understanding and skills to increase the capacity in communities to support children's development and learning at home, in pre-school settings and throughout school.

In addition to this philosophy, PEEP works to the following principles:

1. Adherence to agreed and explicit aims and curriculum
2. Coherent and flexible curriculum
3. Parents'/carers' choice
4. Equal Opportunities
5. Quality of staff; their training, support and development
6. Resources
7. Community links
8. Efficiency

It is this philosophy and these principles that form the basis of PEEP's quality control. They will underpin all the work of PEEP in Phase Two, as the basis of future developments.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

In relation to long-term outcomes, the focus is on developing the following characteristics, dispositions and abilities of the children by the time they enter reception class at age five:

- feeling good about themselves
- listening carefully
- talking about their thoughts and feelings
- knowing many stories, songs and rhymes
- having a good vocabulary
- recognising their own written name
- recognising numbers and letters, and knowing both letter names and letter sounds
- knowing about the different reasons for reading and for writing
- wanting to learn how to read and write

These characteristics, dispositions and abilities are associated with long-term gains in educational achievement, especially in literacy. There are early indications that PEEP has positively affected parents' interactions with their children, especially in the ways in which they support their children's learning. PEEP builds on the growing body of evidence which links such factors as the early development of language, literacy, personal and social development, with outcomes relating to higher educational attainment, improved behaviour and crime prevention, and the disposition to life-long learning.

The PEEP Research Consortium co-ordinates all PEEP studies, aiming over a period of time to research as thoroughly as possible both processes and outcomes. A five-year evaluation of PEEP outcomes by NFER will reach its conclusions in 2004.

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Appendix 3: PEEP Publications and Contacts

If you would like any of our current publications, please fill in the form below and return it to the PEEP Centre.

Where appropriate, please send a cheque with your current order made out to ***Peers Early Education Partnership (PEEP).***

Annual Report (photocopy)	£4 each	☐ Copies
Audited accounts	£2 each	☐ Copies
PEEP video	£15 each	☐ Copies

Rose Hill-Littlemore Sure Start information ☐

Information about forthcoming publications and training ☐

Information about Visitors' Days ☐

Please keep me informed about the work of PEEP ☐

Total amount due .....

Name (please PRINT) .....

Job and place of work (if appropriate) .....

Address .....

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Contact telephone number .....

Please return to:

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